

# This Is Your Torrance: City Becomes Reality...

(Compiled by the League of Women Voters, Torrance)

Torrance as a community became a reality because of increasing land values in the city of Los Angeles, and industrial firms looked to the south for new plant sites.

Upon the advice of Jared Sidney Torrance, a New Yorker dealing in California land after his move west, the Union Tool Company, which was then part of the rapidly expanding Union Oil Co., considered the idea of moving to this area.

Torrance, who served at one time in an executive capacity with 72 corporations, conceived the idea of a planned industrial city in 1911.

After the Union Tool Co. decided to make the move, the Dominguez Land Co. was formed to handle the negotiations.

The City of Torrance was named for Jared Sidney Torrance.

From its very inception, Torrance was a planned community.

One of the most famous town planners of that era, Frederick Law Olmstead, Boston, was engaged by the Dominguez Land Co. to lay out plans for an industrial development and a residential district.

In the plan, there was a provision for an alley on every block and highways routed around, instead of through, the city.

The plan was considered so fine that when the United States government built Boulder Dam, the federal engineers used the Torrance city plan as a pattern.

Before any lots were sold in this planned community of Torrance, the streets, parks, water system, sewage system, and all utilities were installed and trees were planted.

In addition to the Union Tool Co., which through the years has become the National Supply Division of Armco Steel, a rubber tire factory and a shoe iron works were contacted to locate in Torrance.

The Pacific Electric Railroad ran big red passenger cars and freight cars all over Southern California, and the PE obtained a franchise to run a line from Los Angeles to Torrance and on to San Pedro.

The railroad also decided to locate its repair shops in Torrance.

When the town was opened to people, there were a hundred homes, the railroad depot, and six brick buildings in existence.

In its first few years, things hummed in Torrance until 1913 when a slight recession made its presence felt.

Following the outbreak of World War I, in 1914, business picked up. Despite the fact that many of the townsmen left for the army, when the U.S. entered the war in 1917, the young town showed a healthy growth.

When Mr. Torrance died, the outlook was bright although his dreams for the city were as yet unfulfilled.

Shortly after his death, oil was discovered.

From that time, Torrance grew at a lively pace.

Torrance was incorporated as a sixth class city in May of 1921, and received its present charter on August 20, 1947.



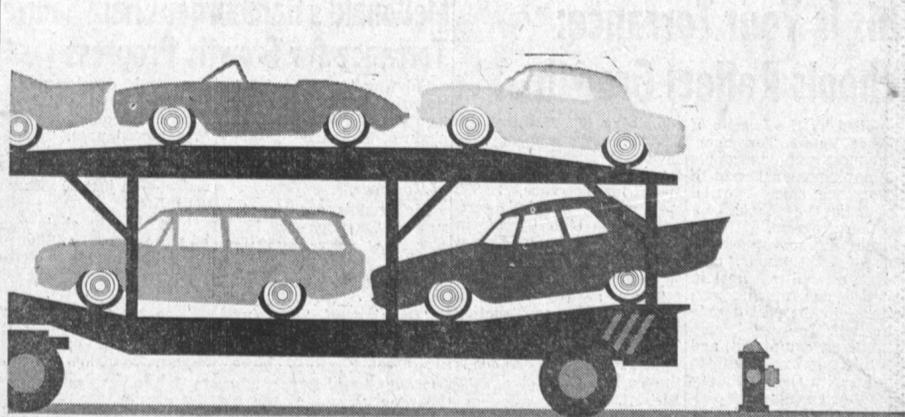
JO ANN CARNAHAN waits upon a customer in the dry cleaning department of the huge Consumer's Mart, which is known to all as CMA.



A FAMILY shops at Consumer's Mart, or CMA as it is familiarly known. From left to right is salesman Warren Masuerier with Mr. and Mrs. David Afleje, and child.

## Employment Rises 13%

Total employment in the Torrance labor market, which includes the City of Torrance, the Palos Verdes Peninsula, Gardena, and Redondo Beach, as of July 1, 1962, was estimated at 87,600 for a 13 percent rise over the previous July 1, according to an economic report prepared by the Security First National Bank. This sharp rise was spurred by manufacturing, which rose 23.4 percent over 1961, due primarily to gains in the electronics industry. Significant growth, too, has been achieved by firms in the missile field and among those supplying parts and components to the aerospace industry. At July, 1962, some 33,000 persons were employed in manufacturing, representing nearly 38 percent of the labor market's total employment. The city of Torrance is the South Coast area's leading manufacturing center and supports a highly diversified complex of both light and heavy industries. According to the 1960 census, 43.1 percent of the gainfully employed residents of



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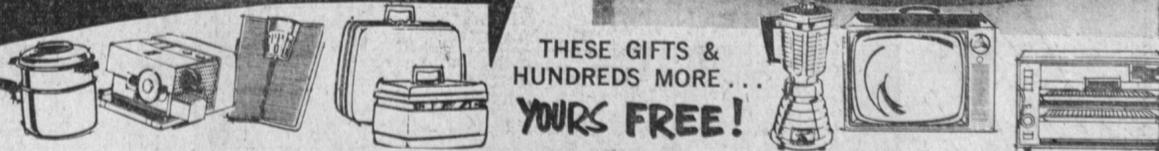
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